

Statement by  
Brenna Wulfschuhle, Rocking H Ranch  
Before  
Farm Credit Administration  
Public Meeting on Farm Credit System Service to  
Young, Beginning and Small Farmers  
November 13, 2002  
Kansas City, Missouri

Chairman Reyna and board members Jorgensen and Flory, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. My name is Brenna Wulfschuhle. My husband, Mark and I operate a diversified family farming operation in western Douglas County. We have three young girls, Kelsey –6, Madison-4, and Baylee-1.

Our farm, Rocking H Ranch Inc., is located on the west side of Clinton Lake between the cities of Lawrence and Topeka. We manage 3,000 acres of land of which 40% is owned and the remaining is leased from neighbors, retired farmers, US Corp. of Engineers and the Kansas Wildlife and Parks Department. We farm 1200 acres of no-till rowcrops consisting of corn, wheat, soybeans and alfalfa. The remaining acres are in grass used for grazing and haying. We manage a 500 head cowherd of both spring and fall calving cows. We also have a beef backgrounding to finish operation and custom feed cattle year round. Mark and I own and operate M & B Applicating, LC, a custom fertilizer and chemical applicating business. We spray 8,000 – 10,000 acres annually.

Frontier Farm Credit currently maintains revolving operating loans on both companies as well as all machinery loans for the companies. Mark and I also have a personal land loan with Farm Credit. We have also used their appraisal service recently for some estate planning for Mark's mom. We have attended several meetings on the crop insurance services provided by Farm Credit as well.

Three years ago we moved all of our business operating loans to Frontier Farm Credit due to the ever-changing agricultural and banking industries. We were with a bank whose name has changed four times in the past ten years. We are on a first name basis with our loan officer, Bob Rhoton, as well as the rest of the office staff. Farm Credit has always

been helpful, responsive to our needs, and gone out of their way to assist us when needed. Bob has been open-minded, straightforward with us and more than willing to work with us. Farm Credit has been a good partner in our farming business.

Agriculture is a rapidly changing industry. It is not an inexpensive or easy business to get started in without some help and encouragement. Young producers are faced with many challenges in agriculture which include: high land/machinery prices, lack of capital, lack of experience, weather, prices of input vs. outputs, and urbanization, just to name a few. Farm Credit has been willing in our operation to take many of these risks with us. When we decided to begin updating and freshening up our equipment, the purchases have been encouraged and financed with Farm Credit. They understand the pressure of time and dependable equipment to get the job done in a timely manner. We made a major change in our operation from a primarily finishing feeding operation to a cow/calf operation in the last eighteen months. Farm Credit has been supportive and stood beside us through the whole transaction with little or no change in our financing. Not many banks today would do that for us without a lot of questions and paperwork. We recently saw an opportunity to lower the age of our cowherd due to the drought in other parts of the country. Bob encouraged us to go ahead and make those purchases of cows even though it might overextend our credit line. It would have taken 2 – 3 weeks to get an answer and approval with our previous lender and then the opportunity would have been lost. It is important to have a bank and loan officer who understands agriculture and wants to see you succeed in your operation.

In today's challenging agriculture environment it is now more important than ever to have and be able to get good reliable financing. As the average age of the farmer continues to increase, it's evident that the young producers are not returning to the farm. We feel that our Farm Credit and its associates have helped us to be profitable and expand our business. We hope to continue the partnership for years to come. Thank you again for your concern for young and beginning farmers and for the opportunity to explain our operation and some of my views on agriculture.